

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
***U.S. EMBASSY PORT LOUIS, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY SECTION***  
**Notice of Funding Opportunity: Statement of Interest**

**Notice of Funding Opportunity Title:** U.S. Embassy Port Louis Public Diplomacy Section Request for Statement of Interest

**Funding Opportunity Number:** DOS-PDS- PortLouis-FY23-01

**Deadline for Applications:** July 1, 2023

**Assistance Listing Number:** 19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs (Smith-Mundt)

**Award ceiling:** \$25,000

**Award floor:** \$3,000

**Total Amount Available:** \$50,000, pending funding availability

**Contact information:** [PortLouis\\_PAS@state.gov](mailto:PortLouis_PAS@state.gov)

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Embassy Port Louis Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations or individuals to submit a Statement of Interest (SOI) to carry out a program (or programs) to promote bilateral relationships between the U.S. and Mauritius and Seychelles. Please carefully read and follow all instructions below.

The submission of the SOI is the first step in a two-step process. Applicants must first submit a concise (3-page) statement of interest designed to clearly communicate program idea and objectives. This is not a full proposal. The purpose of the SOI process is to allow applicants to submit program ideas for evaluation prior to requiring the development of a full proposal application. Upon a merit review of eligible SOIs, selected applicants will be invited to expand on their program idea(s) by submitting a full proposal application. Full proposals will go through a second merit review before final funding decision are made.

**Two-round process:** In Round 1, applicants submit a concise Statement of Interest (SOI) of no more than 1,500 words that describes the project idea and its objectives. The Public Diplomacy Section will review SOIs and invite a limited group of applicants to continue in Round 2. In Round 2, applicants expand their ideas into full funding proposals for formal consideration. SOIs may be submitted for consideration through April 30, 2023. Please download the template found [here](#) and then submit your Statement of Interest to [portlouis\\_pas@state.gov](mailto:portlouis_pas@state.gov).

Successful SOI applicants will be notified via email by June 2, 2023. Instructions on the requirements of a full application submission will be provided at that time and full proposals will be due by July 1, 2023.

**Program Objectives:**

The Public Diplomacy Section invites an SOI for programs that strengthen ties between the U.S. and Mauritius and Seychelles through projects that support core U.S. government priorities.

All programs must include an American cultural element, or connection with American expert/s, organization/s, or institution/s in a specific field that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives.

Examples of potential small grants programs include, but are not limited to:

- Academic and professional lectures, seminars, workshops, and speaker programs;
- Artistic and cultural workshops, joint performances, and exhibitions;
- Activities that encourage women's empowerment and gender equality, respect for underserved and underrepresented individuals, empower marginalized and disadvantaged communities, and encourage social inclusion, access to resources, and fundamental human rights for all.
- Programs developed by an alumnus/a of a U.S.-government sponsored educational
- Youth entrepreneurship, empowerment, and/or leadership programs;
- Programs that support media and freedom of expression.

**Priority Program Areas:**

- A free and open Indo-Pacific, encourage good governance and transparency, strengthen civil society or democratic institutions.
- Youth and women's leadership, entrepreneurship, and STEM programs
- Sustained economic growth, trade, and investment (this may include programs on entrepreneurship, capacity-building, business incubators, and opportunities to convene investors with businesses.)
- Promoting civic education and youth participation in civics, democratic processes, volunteerism, and community service.
- Build media capacity and counter disinformation.
- Respect for underserved and underrepresented individuals, empower marginalized and disadvantaged communities, encourage social inclusion, access to resources, and fundamental human rights for all.
- Joint academic research in partnership with U.S. universities or organizations to accelerate responses and adaptation to climate change
- English language promotion that uses innovative techniques, tools, and U.S. materials for classroom teaching and learning
- Promoting the themes above through sports or arts.

**Participants and Audiences:**

Proposals must identify a clearly defined target audience that the project seeks to influence or impact. Well-defined audiences are countable and accessible through the project's activities.

Proposals should specify the changes in knowledge, understanding, attitudes, or behavior change in attitudes or behavior action that they seek with the project—and how they plan to measure these outcomes.

**The following types of programs are not eligible for funding:**

- Activities that do not contain a distinctly U.S. component;
- Programs relating to partisan political activity;
- Charitable or development activities;
- Infrastructure/construction programs;
- Individual scholarships;
- Personal development;
- Programs that support specific religious activities;
- Fund-raising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs;
- Scientific research;
- Programs intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization;
- Programs that duplicate existing programs;
- Social travel/visits;
- Venture capital; or
- For-profit endeavors.

**Participants and Audiences:**

Programs may be geared to a variety of audiences, depending on the topic. PDS Port Louis' intended target audiences are youth (above age 14) and adults in Mauritius and Seychelles. Proposals will be evaluated on a well-reasoned strategy for the intended audience, as well as appropriate inclusivity, whether based on gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

**B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Length of performance period: up to 18 months

Number of awards anticipated: approximately 4 awards, dependent on availability of funding and amounts requested

Award amounts: Minimum of \$3,000 and maximum of \$25,000

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year 2023 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funding

Anticipated program start date: On or before December 31, 2023

**This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

The Public Diplomacy Section Port Louis reserves the right to award less or more than the funds described in the absence of worthy applications or under such other circumstances as it may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. government.

**Funding Instrument Type:** Grant, Fixed Amount Award, or Cooperative agreement.

Cooperative agreements are different from grants in that bureau/embassy staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation.

**Competition Format and Timeline:** This announcement requests statements of interest from qualified organizations. After a technical review and a merit review, a select number of statements of interest that are determined to have met the criteria explained in this notice will be invited to submit full proposals. Additional guidance and detailed instructions will be provided in the request for a full proposal.

- April 30, 2023 – statement of interest submission deadline
- June 2, 2023 – invitations sent to selected applicants to submit a full proposal
- July 1, 2023 – full proposals due from selected applicants
- August 30, 2023 – notification of selected proposals

**Program Performance Period:** Proposed programs should be completed in 18 months or less. PDS may entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

## **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### **Eligible Applicants**

The Public Diplomacy Section encourages applications from U.S., Mauritian, and Seychellois:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience
- Individuals
- Non-profit or governmental educational institutions
- Governmental institutions

Applicants should be able to document their experience implementing similar projects. For-profit businesses or commercial entities are **not** eligible to apply.

### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

Cost sharing is encouraged but not required.

### **Other Eligibility Requirements and Required Registrations**

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) as well as a valid registration on [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). Please see Section E.3 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

**Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.**

All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the SAM.gov. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards.

***Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.***

The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

***Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.***

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS but do need a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- **Please note that as of November 2022 and February 2022 respectively, organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code or CAGE code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove a CAGE or NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should [submit a help desk ticket \(“incident”\)](#) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at [fsd.gov](http://fsd.gov) using the following language: “I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain a CAGE or NCAGE code. I

understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated.”

**Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO NOT plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:**

Step 1: Proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

**Exemptions**

An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

- An applicant’s identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization’s status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.
- For an applicant, if the Federal awarding agency makes a determination that there are exigent circumstances that prohibit the applicant from receiving a unique entity identifier and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a Federal award. In these instances, Federal awarding agencies must require the recipient to obtain a unique entity identifier and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the Federal award date.

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing a justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

**D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

**Address to Request Application Package**

This Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) and any amendments and supplementary information can be found at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (search by Opportunity Number) or on the U.S. Embassy Port Louis website at: <https://mu.usembassy.gov/education-culture/grants-programs/rsoi-2023/>.

**Please follow all instructions below carefully.** Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement will not be considered.

### **Application Submission Process and Deadline**

Public Diplomacy Section Port Louis will accept Statements of Interest from the date this RSOI is posted until April 30, 2023. SOIs received after this time will not be reviewed.

Upon review of proposals submitted via email, Public Diplomacy Section Port Louis will notify those who will be invited to the next round of the grants process. The second, and final, round of the grant process will require applicants to submit a full application. More instructions will be provided at that stage of the process.

### **Content of Application**

Concept Notes should be concise and to the point, no more than 1,500 words long, and have sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. Please download the concept note template found [here](#).

Please follow all instructions below carefully. SOIs that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

### **Content of SOI must include:**

- A brief project description summarizing goals, objectives, outcomes, performance indicators, beneficiaries, and proposed timeline.
- A clear statement of the applicant's organizational capacity to carry out the proposed activity and manage U.S. Government funds.
- Documents in English
- The anticipated total budget amount (in U.S. dollars)

### **How to Submit**

Please attach the concept note as a Microsoft Word document. Please name your file using the following format: **Organization Name – 2023 Statement of Interest.docx**

All SOI materials must be submitted by email (.pdf or .doc formats only) to [PortLouis\\_PAS@state.gov](mailto:PortLouis_PAS@state.gov) with subject line "SOI: PDS NOFO 2023 – Name of Organization/Individual", no later than April 30, 2023.

## **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

A Grant Review Committee will review all eligible applications. Each application will be evaluated and rated based on the evaluation criteria outlined below.

**U.S. Component:** The project has a clear U.S. component that incorporates U.S. expertise, model, processes, or personnel.

**Organizational capacity and record on previous grants:** The organization has expertise in its stated field and PDS is confident of its ability to undertake the program. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

**Quality and feasibility of the program idea:** The program idea is well developed, with details about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

**Goals and objectives:** Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

**Embassy priorities:** Applicant has clearly described how stated goals are related to and support U.S. Embassy priority areas and target audiences outlined in section A.

Successful SOI applicants will be notified via email by June 2, 2023. Instructions on the requirements of a full application submission will be provided at that time.

Please note, an invitation to present a full submission is not a financial commitment and is not a guarantee of any future funding.

## **F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **Federal Award Notices**

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this Notice of Funding Opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.



**Payment Method:** Payments will be made in at least two installments, as needed to carry out the program activities.

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified via email.

### **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

**Terms and Conditions:** Before submitting the SOI, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply if a full proposal application is requested and awarded, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>. Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

**Reporting Requirements:** Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

**Branding Requirements:** As a condition of receipt of a grant award, all materials produced pursuant to the award, including training materials, materials for recipients or materials to communicate or promote with foreign audiences a program, event, project, or some other activity under an agreement, including but not limited to invitations to events, press materials, and backdrops, podium signs, etc. must be marked appropriately with the relevant U.S. Embassy branding in a size and prominence equal to (or greater than) any other logo or identity.

### **G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the SOI application process, please contact the Public Diplomacy Section at: [PortLouis\\_PAS@state.gov](mailto:PortLouis_PAS@state.gov).